2006

Merrillville Police Department

ANNUAL REPORT

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Public Service Commitment

It is essential that each officer realizes the responsibilities and various duties of the position and the confidence that is reposed to that position, all of which are of great importance to both the public and to the officer. As a result of acceptance to appointment as a police officer assigned to the Merrillville Police Department, an officer may appear to have lost his identity as a private citizen. The public no longer thinks of an officer as a citizen, thus an officers personal conduct, both on and off duty, will reflect upon the entire police department. An officer should realize that a person is identified in accordance with the company he keeps; therefore, an officer should exercise care and good judgment in the selection of associates as well as the reputation of fraternity and association. An officer's character is his capital. An officer must deal fairly and honorably with all persons contacted.

An officer should avoid placing himself under special obligation unnecessarily to anyone. From time to time an officer's duty may demand that he act in opposition to some individual interest. An officer should receive and consider all complaints realizing that every person has a right to be heard and a word of comfort to the afflicted or advice to the erring at the proper time and place will prove rewarding for the officer and the police department as well as the individual involved. Whenever it is necessary to affect an arrest, do so without fail, using only the degree of force necessary to protect yourself and properly secure the person or persons so arrested.

An officer's promptness in his conduct is a very important factor. An officer should be present for duty on time and prompt in appearance for all appointments. An officer should keep his immediate commanding officer informed where there is any indication that prompt attention to duty due to circumstances beyond his control is in question. An officer should school himself in all occasions to keep cool. An officer should set his mind to his work and never suffer himself to be an idle spectator while on duty.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the Merrillville Police Department is an organization whose very existence is justified solely on the basis of community service.

It should be considered the duty and privilege of every officer, not only to protect the citizens from the criminal, but also to protect and defend the rights guaranteed under our structure of government. The Merrillville Police Department's broad philosophy must embrace a wholehearted determination to protect and support the doctrine of individual rights while providing for the security and safety of persons and property in the community. In meeting this objective it is the duty of our Police Department to operate as a service organization.

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

2006 Town Government

Merrillville Town Council

Richard Hardaway, President

Shawn Pettit, Vice President

Terrell Taylor

D. Lance Huish

David Uzelac

Joseph Shudick Jr.

Ron Widing

Clerk-Treasurer

Rose Ann Antich

Town Manager

Tim Brown

Board of Police Commissioners

Larry Ulbrich, President

Rick Bella

John Johnson

Chief of Police

Nicholas L. Bravos

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

2006 Merrillville Town Council

Richard Hardaway

Town Council President

Terrell Taylor

Ward 1

D. Lance Huish

Ward 3

David Uzelac

Ward 4

Joseph Shudick Jr.

Ward 5

Shawn Pettit

Ward 6, Vice President

Ron Widing

Ward 7

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners

Larry Ulbrich

Commission President

Richard Bella

Commissioner

John Johnson

Commissioner

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From the Chief of Police

As I reflect upon our past year at the Merrillville Police Department, once again I want to acknowledge and thank the Merrillville Town Council, Town Manager, and department heads for their continued support and confidence.

The Merrillville Police Department continues to put quality service as a priority to our community and all of those we serve. In our schools, Merrillville Police Officers are focused on providing our children with support and guidance through our Adopt-a-School program. In addition, our officers are committed to programs such as D.A.R.E., and other school committees and youth programs. This year we were able to add an additional School Resource Officer to our Junior High School. This additional officer expresses our true commitment to our young resident's.

We also continue to serve our community with public information and assistance with neighborhood groups. Once again the Merrillville Police Department was actively involved in the 2006 National Night Out where our Neighborhood Enforcement Officers visited ten neighborhood night out gatherings meeting new neighbors and rekindling old relationships.

While we continually strive to impact our community with outreach programs, we understand that protecting and serving the citizen's of Merrillville is our first priority. The Merrillville Police Department responded to 45,934 calls for service in 2006, which was an increase of 5.5% from the prior year. To address such a call load, our officers logged 8,348 hours of training and we increased our manpower by one additional officer in 2006.

I would like to thank clerical staff for their efforts in compiling all the necessary information and data for this annual report. I sincerely appreciate and thank each and every member of the Merrillville Police Department for all their hard work during this past year. Their dedication and work ethic are second to none. We as a department would not have obtain our goal of providing a safe community without the dedicated professionals that serve the citizen's of the Town of Merrillville.

Respectfully,

Nicholas L. Bravos

Nicholas L. Bravos

Chief of Police

Nicholas L. Bravos

Chief of Police

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Introduction

In reviewing the data presented in this year end report, one should understand that the main purpose of this information is to compile criminal, traffic, and other police related statistics for administrative use. These statistics assist us with the affective operations of our police department. Simultaneously these statistics are provided to individuals who are not directly associated with our police department operations however have a related interest in the issues which govern our community.

Reporting and collecting police criminal statistics, and the interpretation of those statistics, are a vital component of law enforcement. It is essential that we maintain accurate statistics, failing to do so would result in a loss in police performance which would culminate into a loss for our community. By using these records and statistics we may meet the many challenges which present them-selves to us everyday in the field of law enforcement.
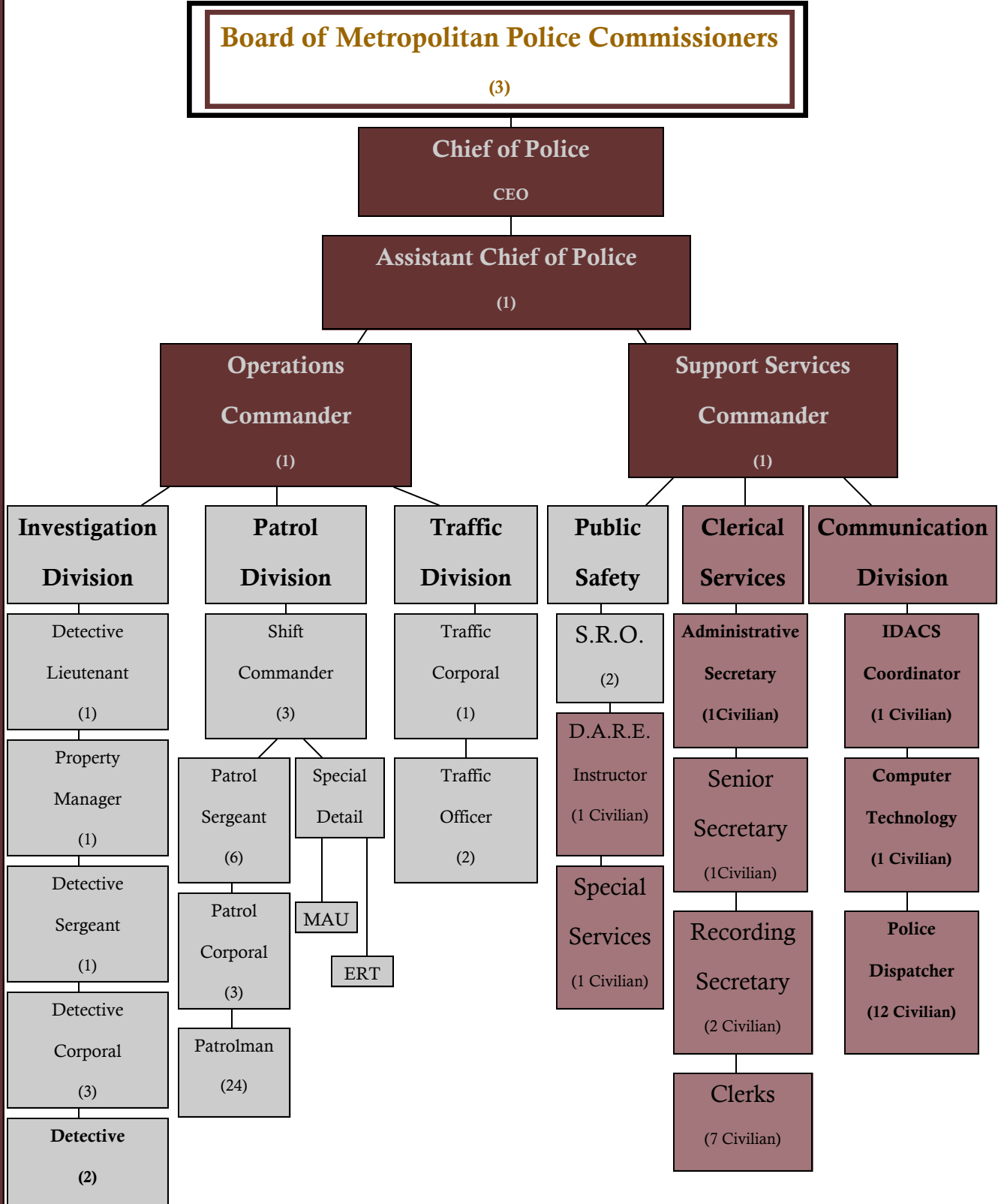
Crime is inherently a social problem which concerns the entire community we live in. The crime rate is primarily the result of those residing within that community, victims, as well as the offenders themselves. The police department, utilizing our collection of records, statistically report on local crime rates within their community as part of a responsibility to its citizen's. Citizen's support of law enforcement has a direct impact on the success of the police department to reduce crime.

The Merrillville Police Department utilizes several approaches in an effort to reduce and control crime including prevention, suppression, and deterrence. As we did in 2005, again in 2006 we focused on a more proactive approach to crime. We continued to utilize the Neighborhood Enforcement Team approach in regards to community oriented policing. This team approach was instituted in 2004 and continues to allow officers an opportunity to get back into the neighborhoods and business districts to better develop communications. It is essential for law enforcement to improve communications with our citizen's so we may better serve them.

One may not compare statistics from year to year without first considering all the factors involved. The material in this report may be used as a guide in determining the changes in the rate of crime between individual years. The rates of crime may be compared to those found in the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports.
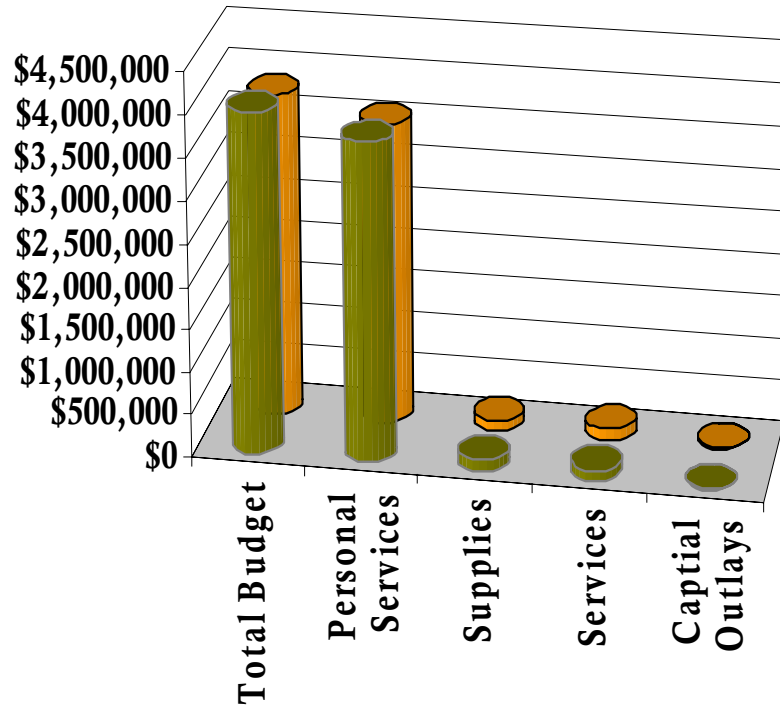
"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Organizational Structure

Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners

(3)

Chief of Police

CEO

Assistant Chief of Police

(1)

Operations Commander

(1)

Support Services Commander

(1)

Investigation Division

- Detective Lieutenant (1)
- Property Manager (1)
- Detective Sergeant (1)
- Detective Corporal (3)
- **Detective (2)**

Patrol Division

- Shift Commander (3)
  - Patrol Sergeant (6)
    - Patrol Corporal (3)
      - Patrolman (24)
  - Special Detail
    - MAU
      - ERT

Traffic Division

- Traffic Corporal (1)
  - Traffic Officer (2)

Public Safety

- S.R.O. (2)
- D.A.R.E. Instructor (1 Civilian)
- Special Services (1 Civilian)

Clerical Services

- **Administrative Secretary (1Civilian)**
- Senior Secretary (1Civilian)
- Recording Secretary (2 Civilian)
- Clerks (7 Civilian)

Communication Division

- **IDACS Coordinator (1 Civilian)**
- **Computer Technology (1 Civilian)**
- **Police Dispatcher (12 Civilian)**

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Operating Budget

2005	
Total Budget	$3,809,039.00
Personal Services	$3,552,039.00
Supplies	$ 121,000.00
Services	$ 128,000.00
Capital Outlay	$ 8,000.00

2006	
Total Budget	$4,001,621.00
Personal Services	$3,743,621.00
Supplies	$ 136,000.00
Services	$ 117,000.00
Capital Outlay	$ 5,000.00

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Personnel by Rank
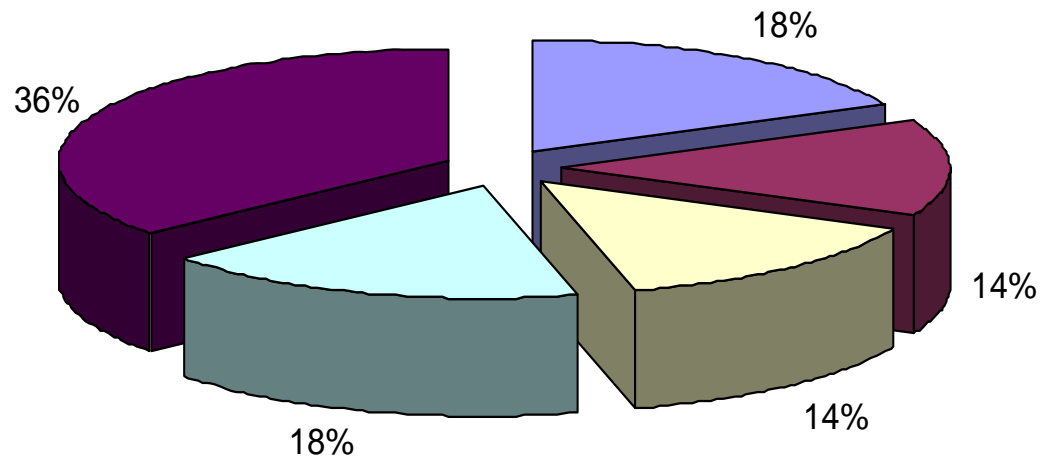
1% 1% 3%

5%

30%

12%

12%

36%
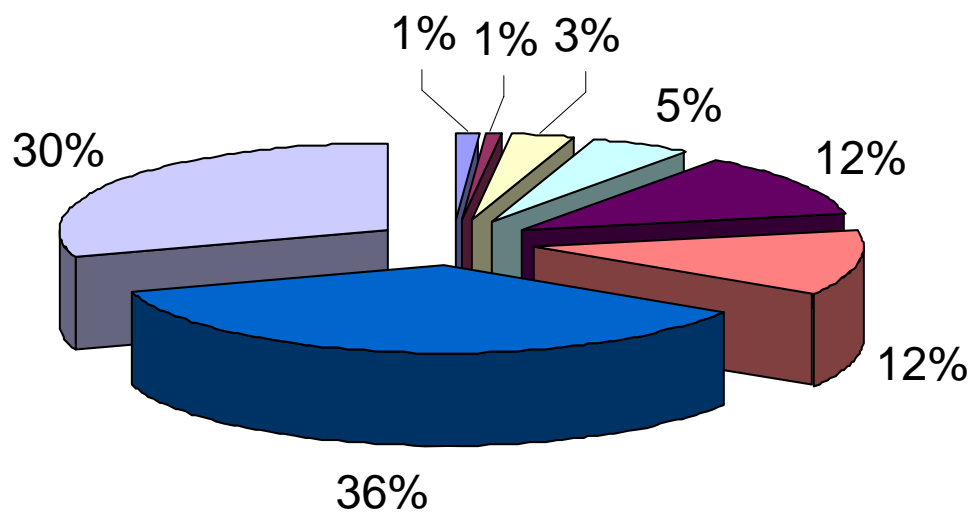
- Chief
- Asst. Chief
- Commander
- Lieutenant
- Sergeant
- Corporal
- Patrolman
- Civilian

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2006 Years of Service

Average Age - 36

Average Years of Service - 10

Legend:
- 20 + years
- 16 - 20 years
- 11 - 15 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 0 - 5 years

Pie chart values: 18%, 14%, 14%, 18%, 36%

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Administrative Staff

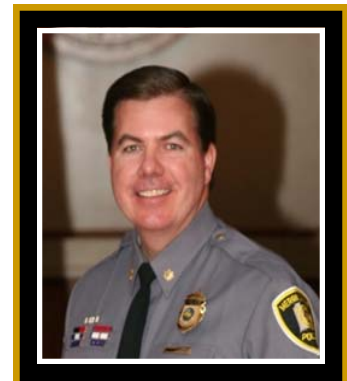

Nicholas L. Bravos

Chief of Police

Joseph Petruch Jr.

Assistant Chief

D. Lance Huish

Operations Commander

James Donohue

Support Services Commander

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Records Division

Clerical Statistics

The year 2006 has proven to be another busy year for our Records Division. The year ran smoothly due to a great secretarial staff. The secretaries continue to put forth a tremendous effort in working together professionally in running an efficient Records Division.

The number of Town Ordinance Violation citations received in the department in 2006 was 1145. This was a 21.7% increase from the 896 citations received in 2005.

The number of false alarm letters issued from the department was 1,747. This was a 2.3% increase from the 1,708 issued in 2005.

The number of gun permits issued totaled 263. This was a 33% decrease from previous year where 393 were issued. This decrease was a result of the new Indiana State Law which changed the renew process and now offers a lifetime gun permit. Revenue totaled $4,180.00.

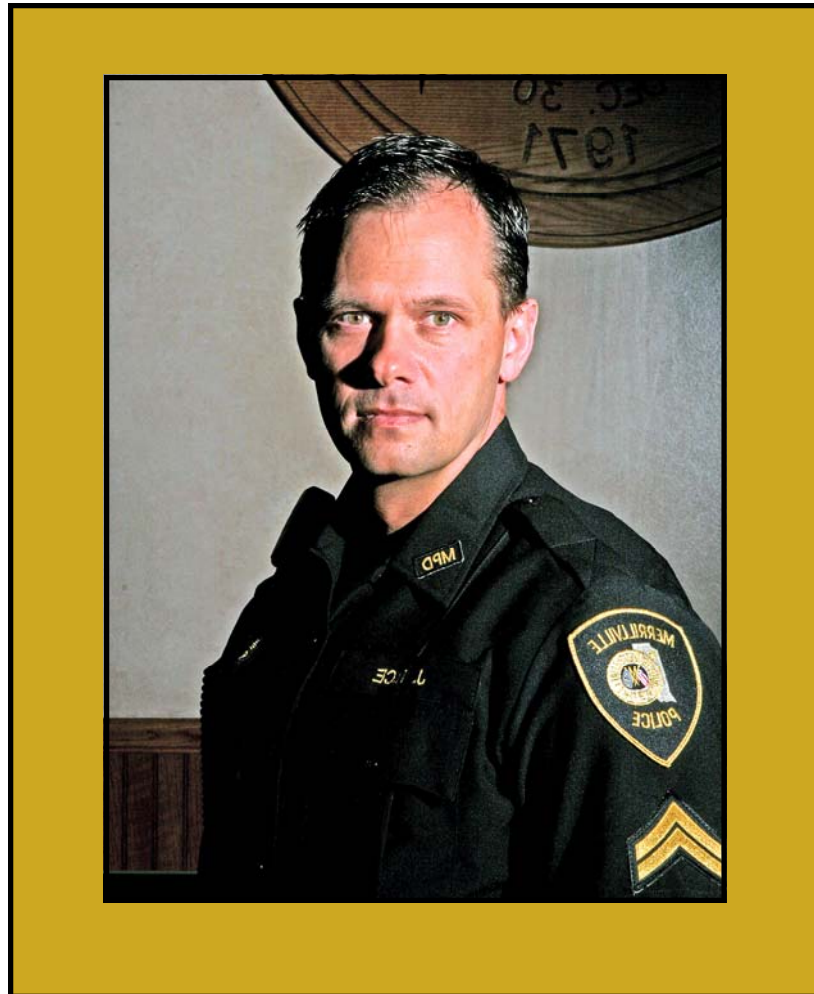Accident requests from the public totaled 3,663 with a total revenue of $18,515.00.

2006 Clerical Staff

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Officer of the Year

2006 Officer of the Year

Detective Corporal Jeff Rice

The officer of the Year award is presented to the individual who has unselfishly given of themselves for the betterment department. This individual has placed the department and the citizens of Merrillville as a priority in their lives.

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Excellence in Law Enforcement Awards

Excellence in Law Enforcement Supervision

The excellence in law enforcement award in supervision is presented to a supervisor within the organization who continues to set a high standard for others to emulate. This individual is a vital part of the departments success as a public safety agency.

Sergeant Nick Berzac Jr.

Excellence in Law Enforcement Investigation

The excellence in law enforcement award in investigation is presented to a detective within the organization who continues to achieve great success in criminal investigation. This individual is an integral part of the departments detective bureau which is responsible for solving crimes in our community.

Corporal James Lilley

Excellence in Law Enforcement Patrol

The excellence in law enforcement award in patrol is presented to a patrol officer within our organization who relentlessly sacrifices themselves for the sole purpose of protecting and serving our community. This individual is the most valuable player on our department.   This individual always gives of himself with no expectation of any reward.

Patrolman Joseph Cooper

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Neighborhood Enforcement Team

    In June of 2004 the Town of Merrillville was introduced to a new community oriented policing plan titled "Neighborhood Enforcement Team Project". The program focuses on Officers getting into the neighborhood and business districts on a more personal level as to improve communication between the police and the residents they serve. The Town was divided into 14 areas and one officer was assigned to each area. The assigned area became the responsibility of that officer. The officer would patrol his area looking to meet residents and business owners offering them any assistance they may need. The officer also looks to reach out to the children in the community. Don't be surprised if you see officers shooting baskets with youngsters or playing in a park. That's what this programs all about, officers reaching out to the community letting the citizens know that the police are friendly, compassionate, and are here to help in any way they can. The Neighborhood Enforcement Team Project has been funded by the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant in the past, however to keep the program functioning we have now set funding aside within our normal operating budget. It has been unfortunate that the grant funding resources have turned the sights away from community oriented policing and focused on other issues they feel are important. Our neighborhoods are extremely important and the administration of the Merrillville Police Department has put communication with our citizens as a priority in our community. We have also dedicated a phone line solely to the program. Residents may call (219)756-6180 to reach the Neighborhood Enforcement Officer's phone line and leave a message for any of the fourteen Neighborhood Enforcement Officers. Below is a list of Officer's and the area they represent with the extension number they may be reached at via the Neighborhood Enforcement Line. Having a dedicated phone line offers immediate attention to one's issue and in addition we believe gives a direct message to the officer without others involved.

Neighborhood Enforcement Line

(219)756-6180

|	
Area 1 Officer David Degard Ext. 517	Area 8 Sgt. Brad Best Ext. 355
Area 2 Officer Luther Cuttino Ext. 516	Area 9 Cpl. Robert Wiley Ext.510
Area 3 Cpl. Nick Berzac Ext. 511	Area 10 Officer James Bogner Ext. 363
Area 4 Cpl. David Barron Ext. 350	Area 11 Officer Ray Smith Ext. 538
Area 5 Officer David DeSalle Ext. 518	Area 12 Officer Dan Veschak Ext. 533
Area 6 Officer Barry Clanton Ext. 355	Area 13 Cpl. Michael Gurgevich Ext.541
Area 7 Sgt. Tim Finnerty Ext. 374	Area 14 Sgt. Robert Morgan Ext.352

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N.E.T. Area Map

Town of Merrillville
NEIGHBORHOOD ENFORCEMENT TEAM
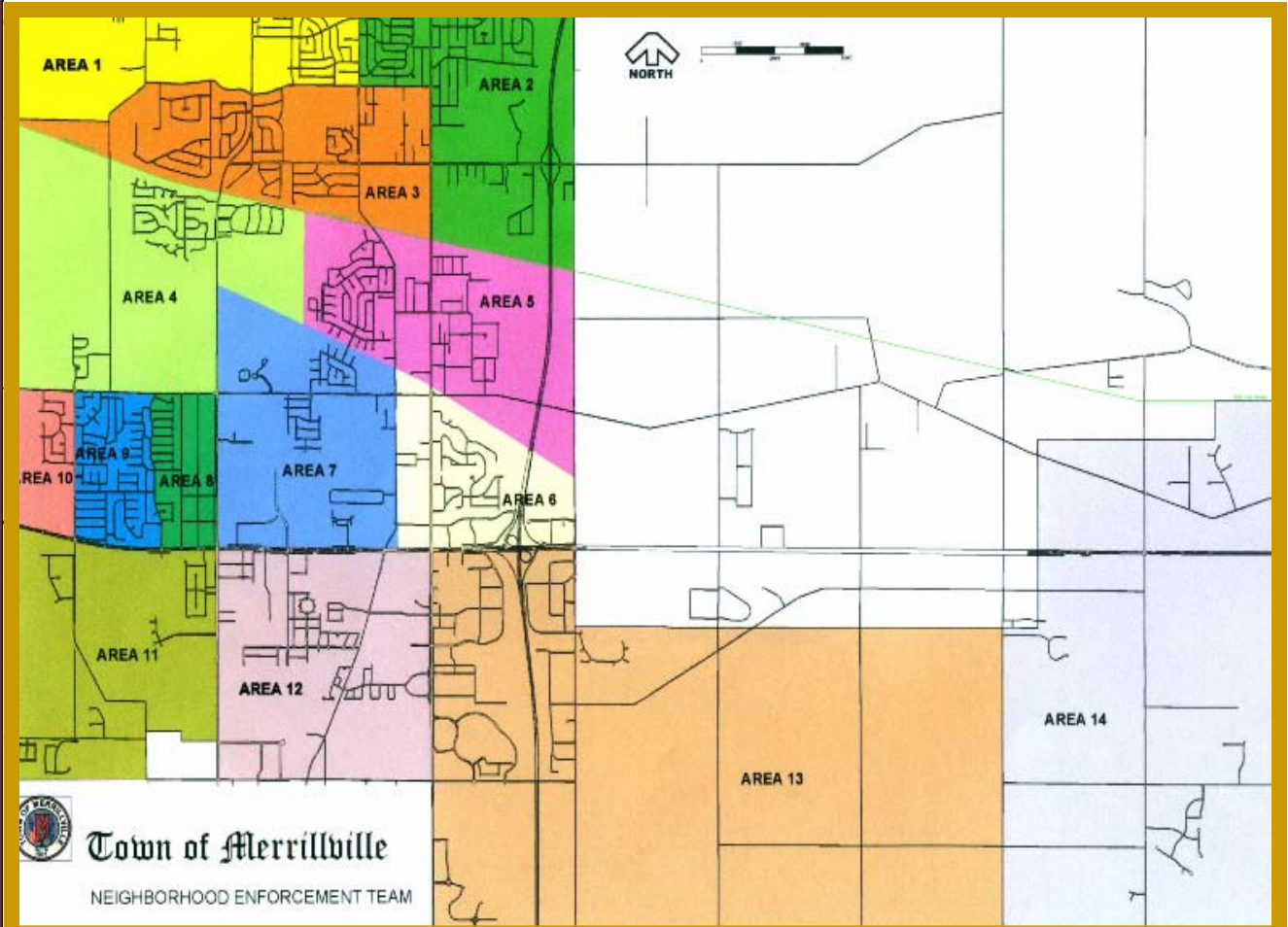
"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Department Training

Training Hours

Patrol Division	7,244
Investigations	452
Traffic Unit	314
Canine Unit	120
Administration	218
TOTAL:	**8,348**

2006 Department Training by Division

- Patrol Division
- Administration
- Canine Unit
- Traffic
- Investigations
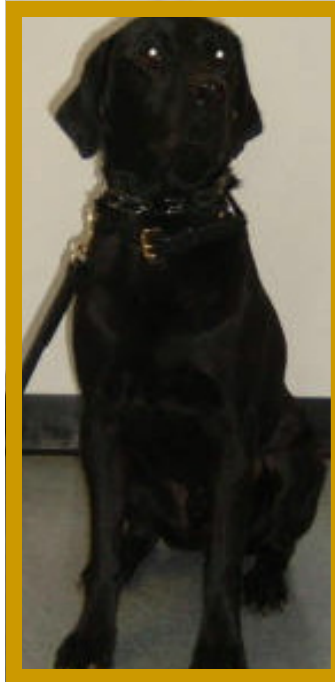
3% 1% 4% 5% 87%
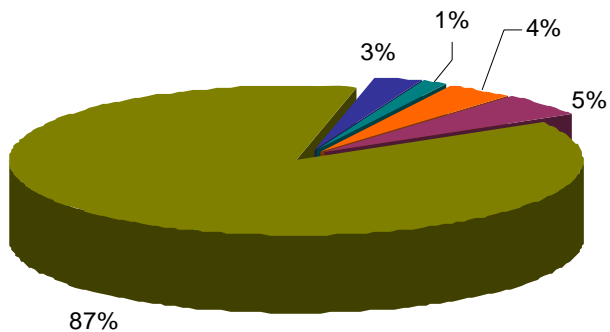
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2006 Annual Canine Report

"Sirrus"   "Rocco"

Officer N. Schrock

Canine Handler

Officer D. DeSalle

Canine Handler

Seizures:

Marijuana ……………… 721.2 Grams

Cocaine ………………… 2.3 Grams

Money …………………$1,231.00

Canine Searches

Vehicle Searches ………….. 14

Drug Searches ……………   27

School Searches …………… 4

Building Searches ………… 15

Other Activity

Demonstrations …………… 3

Callouts ……………………. 6

Tracks …………………… .. 10

Apprehensions ……………16

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Traffic Division

Traffic Division Statistics

2006 was a very successful year for the Traffic Enforcement Division. This year the unit issued 2,238 citations, of which many were for speeding, seat belt violations and child passenger restraint violations. The traffic Enforcement Division also made 69 Misdemeanor traffic arrests during the year.

As the Town continues to grow, the number of traffic crashes continues to grow each year. The Traffic Division responded to several property damage as well as personal injury crashes. This year the unit has taken a total of 433 State crash reports. It will continue to be the goal of the Traffic Division to further reduce the number of crashes and injuries on town roadways.

Through continuing participation with other agencies, the Merrillville Police Department receives state and federal grant money to take part in special enforcement projects such as Operation Pull-over, a national seat belt mobilization campaign, and the D.U.I. taskforce, which targets impaired drivers. The success of these enforcement efforts, combined with the hard work and dedication of every Merrillville Police Officers, has led to nearly an 85% seat belt usage rate within the Town.

The Traffic Division also participates in public relation activities throughout the year. A Child Passenger Safety Technician on our department is available to inspect and install car seats. The unit also participated in several events with other agencies and municipalities in conducting child passenger safety clinics for the public. The Traffic Division continues to receive media coverage which was used to educate the public about local traffic concerns and enforcement issues.

As I look ahead to 2007, I would like to encourage all citizens of the Town of Merrillville and Northwest Indiana to drive safely, buckle their safety belts and as always don't drink and drive.

Sincerely,

Barry Clanton

Corporal Barry Clanton

Corporal B. Clanton

Traffic Supervisor

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Traffic Division

Corporal B. Clanton

Traffic Enforcement Supervisor
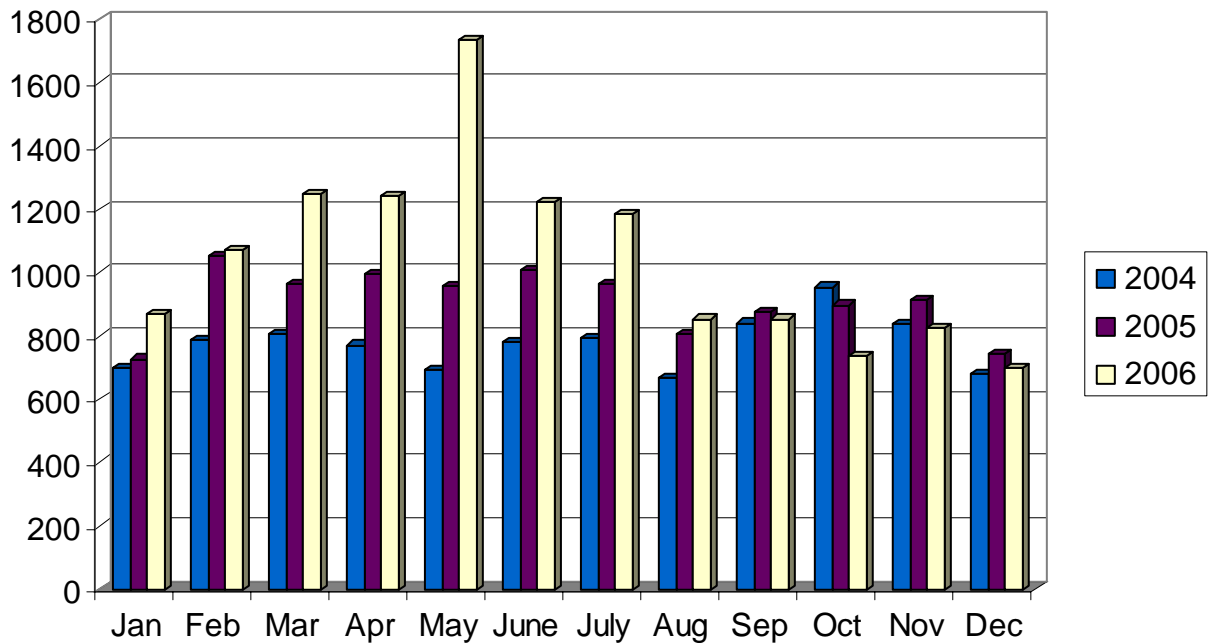
"Seatbelts Save Lives"

Officer D. Etienne

Officer K. Horvath

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Department Citations and Warnings

Citations Issued per Month

Legend: 2004, 2005, 2006

Warnings Issued per Month

Legend: 2004, 2005, 2006
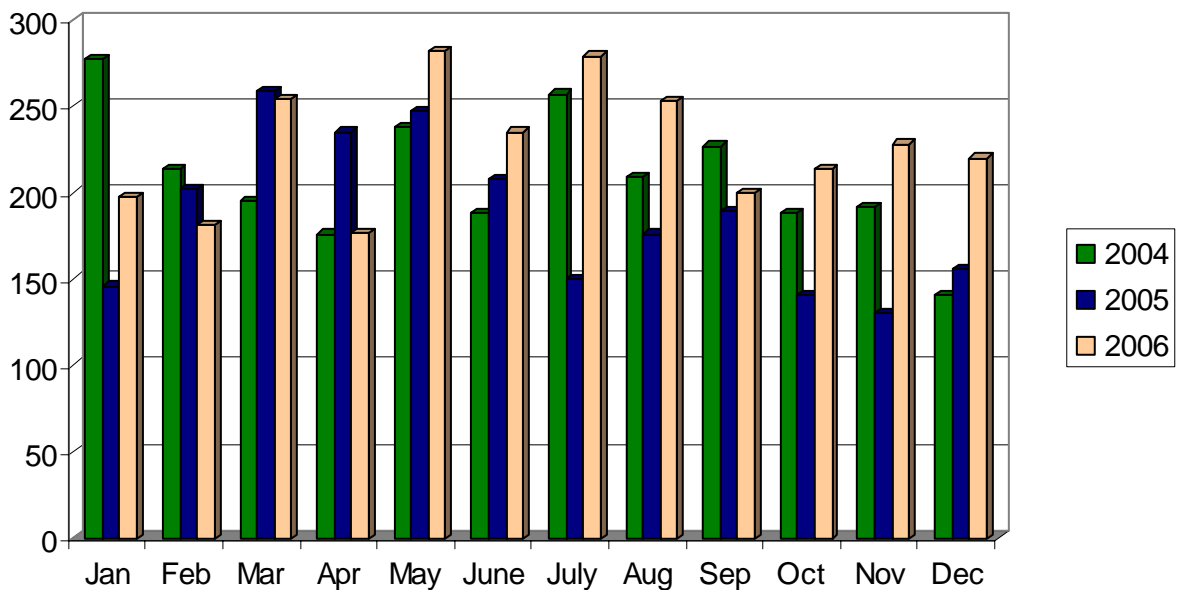
"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Traffic Crash Reports

State Accident Reported per Month

Legend:
- 2004
- 2005
- 2006
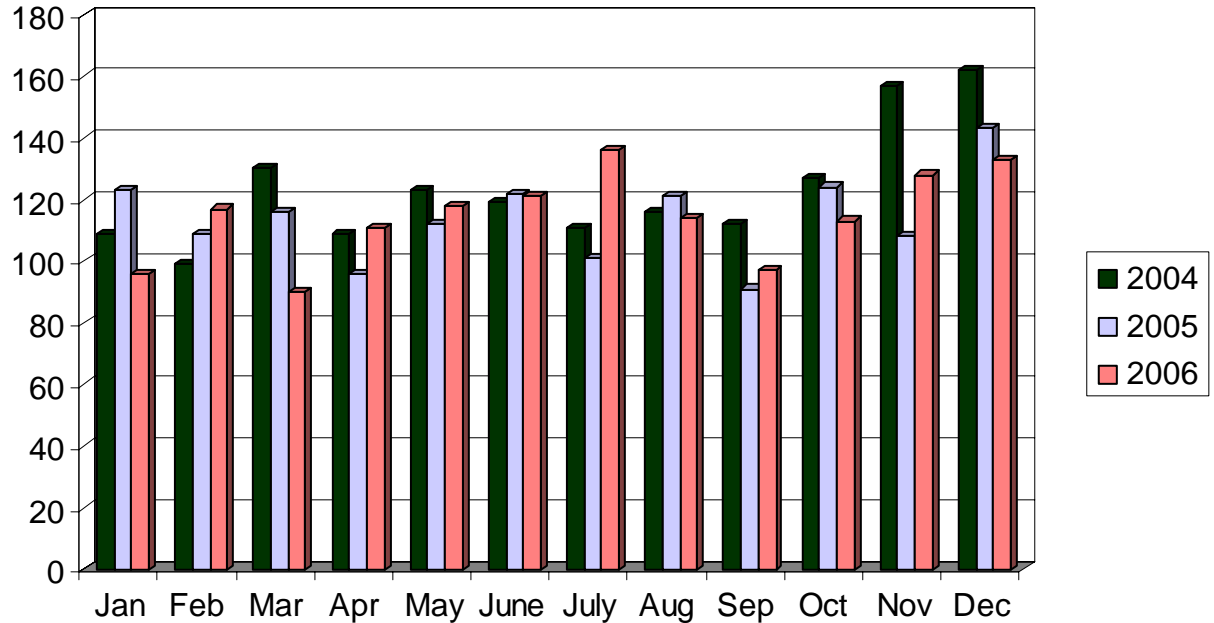
Private Property Accident Reported per Month

Legend:
- 2004
- 2005
- 2006
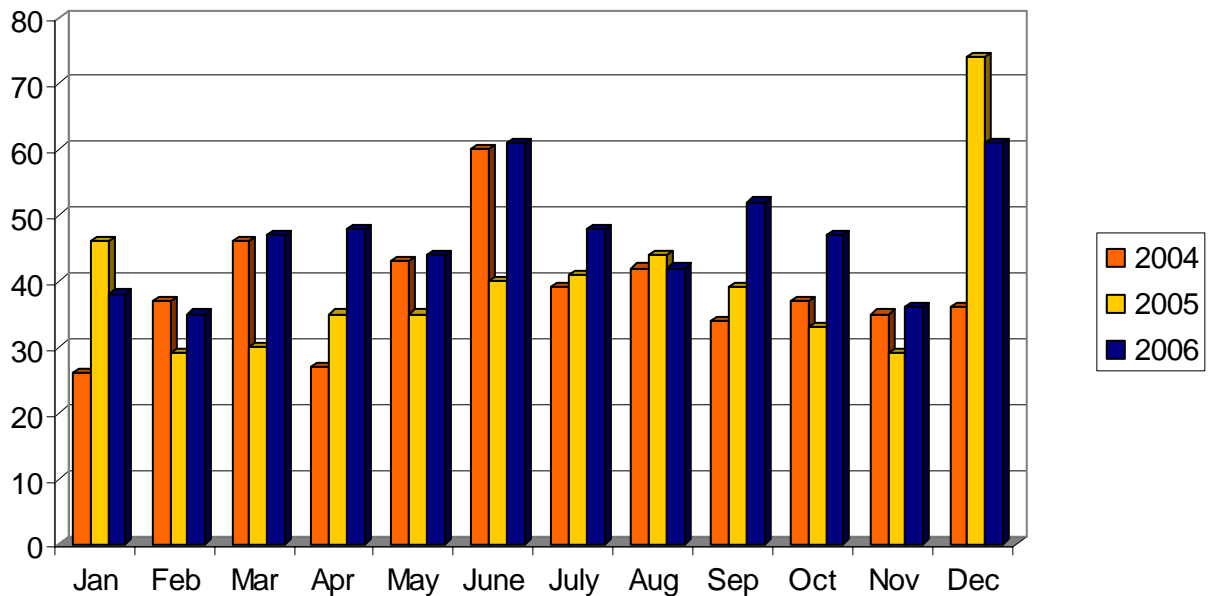
"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Traffic Crashes By Type

2004 , 2005, 2006 Crashes

Bar chart data:
- 2004 Property Damage: 886
- 2005 Property Damage: 881
- 2006 Property Damage: 905
- 2004 Personal Injury: 464
- 2005 Personal Injury: 358
- 2006 Personal Injury: 337
- 2004 Fatal Accidents: 6
- 2005 Fatal Accidents: 5
- 2006 Fatal Accidents: 6
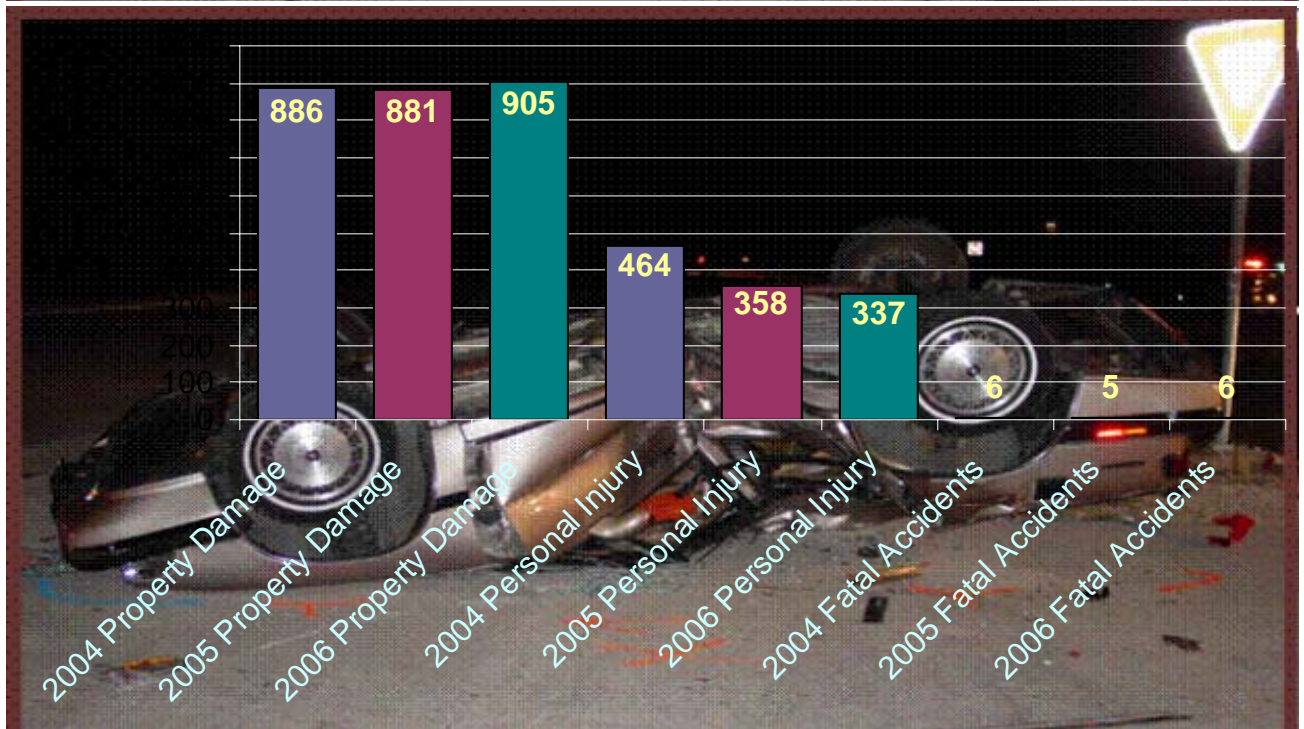
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Uniformed Crime Reports

United States Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigations

Uniformed Crime Report

The uniform Crime Report is a city, county, and state law enforcement program which provides a nationwide view of crime, based on the submission of statistics by law enforcement agencies throughout the country. The numbers listed here are the numbers report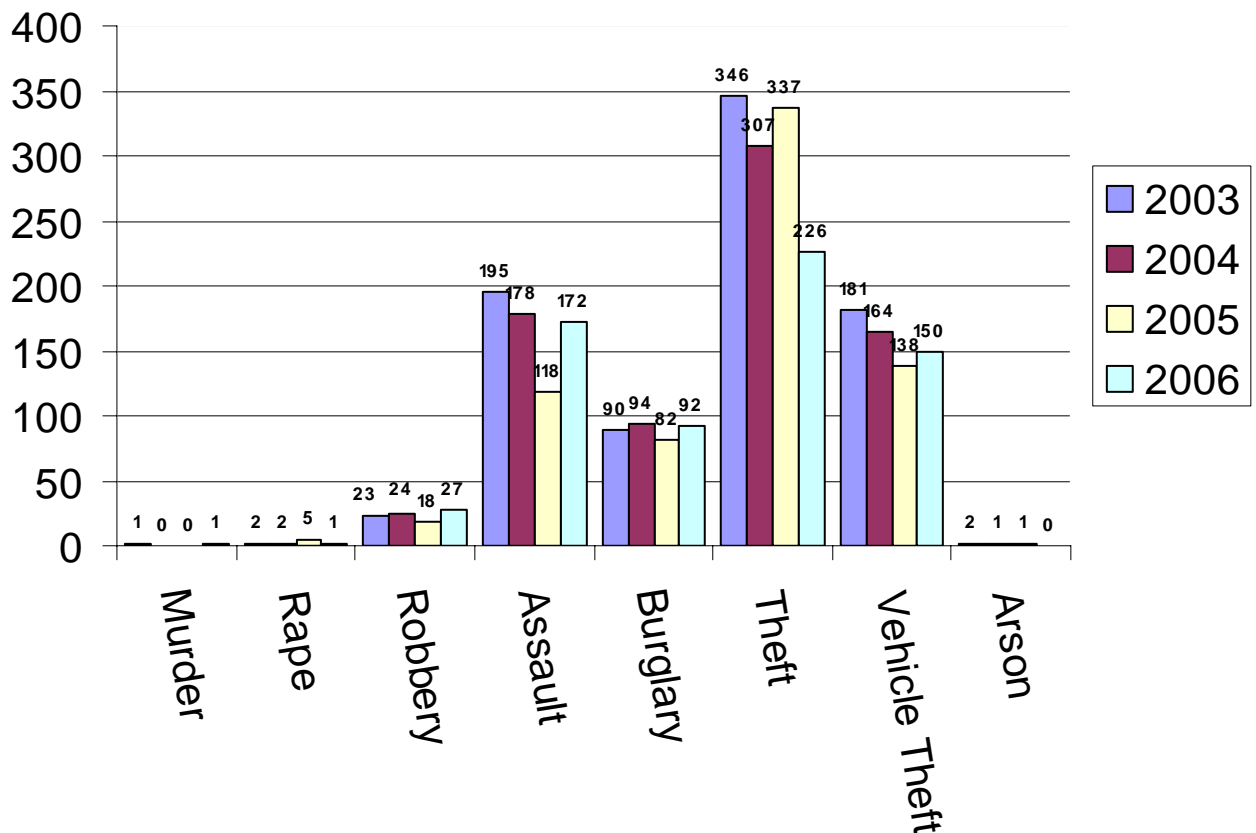ed to the FBI UCR Program by the Merrillville Police Department. Not all crimes reported to the police department qualify for the UCR Program. The eight crimes displayed below are reported based on UCR guidelines.

Crime	2003	2004	2005	2006
Murder	1	0	0	1
Rape	2	2	5	1
Robbery	23	24	18	27
Assault	195	178	118	172
Burglary	90	94	82	92
Theft	346	307	337	226
Vehicle Theft	181	164	138	150
Arson	2	1	1	0

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Reported Burglaries

Year to Year Comparison

Bar chart showing Residential Burglary and Business Burglary by year:

Year	Residential Burglary	Business Burglary
2002	38	38
2003	50	40
2004	56	38
2005	50	32
2006	62	30

Legend: □ Residential Burglary □ Business Burglary
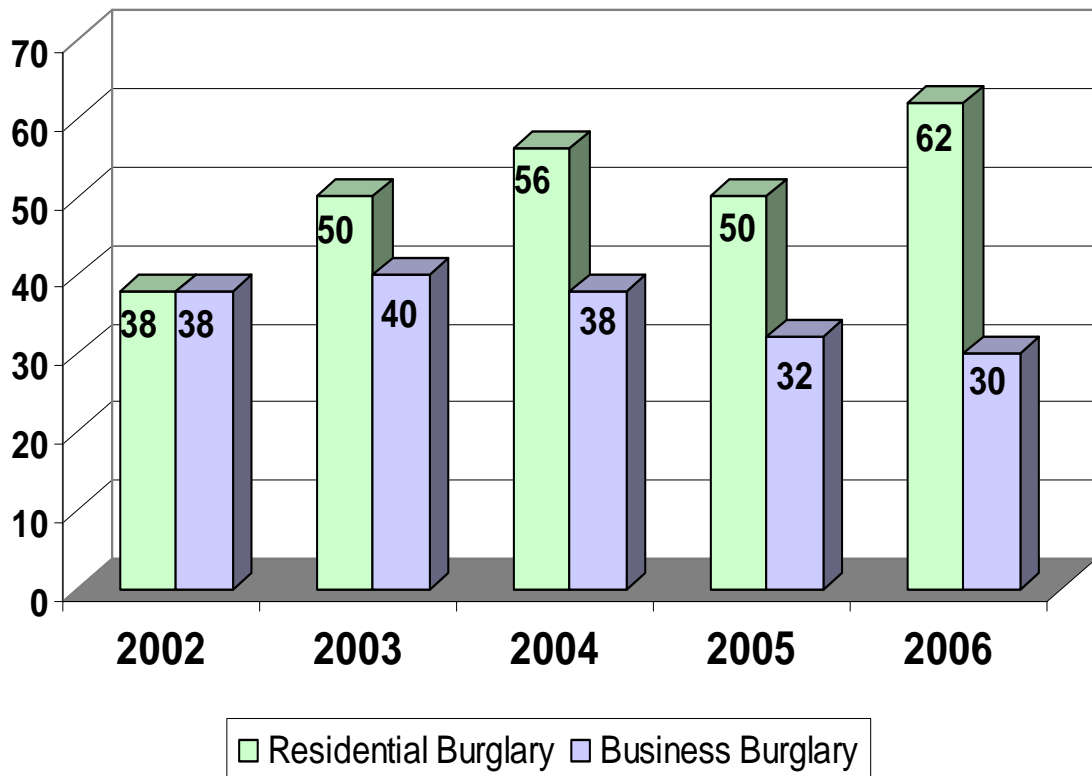
Business Burglary by Time of Day

Time	2005	2006	%Change
6p—6a	14	17	+18
6a—6p	10	12	+17

Residential Burglary by Time of Day

Time	2005	2006	%Change
6p—6a	18	27	+34
6a—6p	32	36	+12

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Reported Larcenies

Year to Year Comparison

Year	Reported Larcenies
2002	766
2003	779
2004	784
2005	730
2006	802

Category Comparison

Category	2003	2004	2005	2006
Larceny from Residence	56	75	90	114
Larceny from Business	107	105	94	112
Larceny from Auto	290	232	246	291
Conversion (Shoplifting)	151	161	110	124
Larceny Other	175	211	190	161
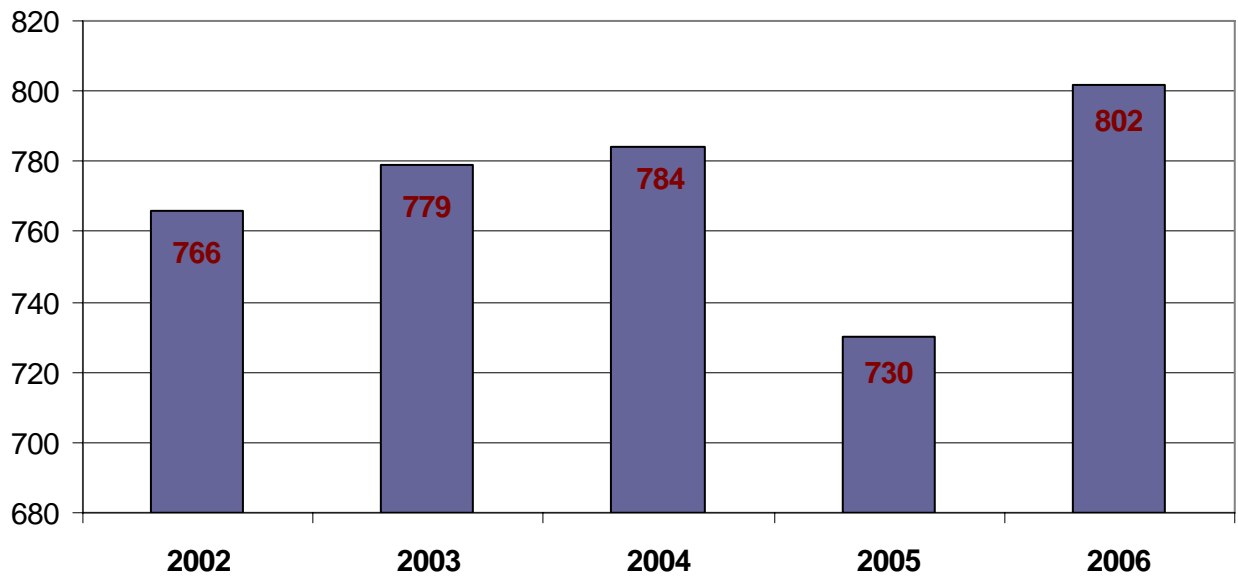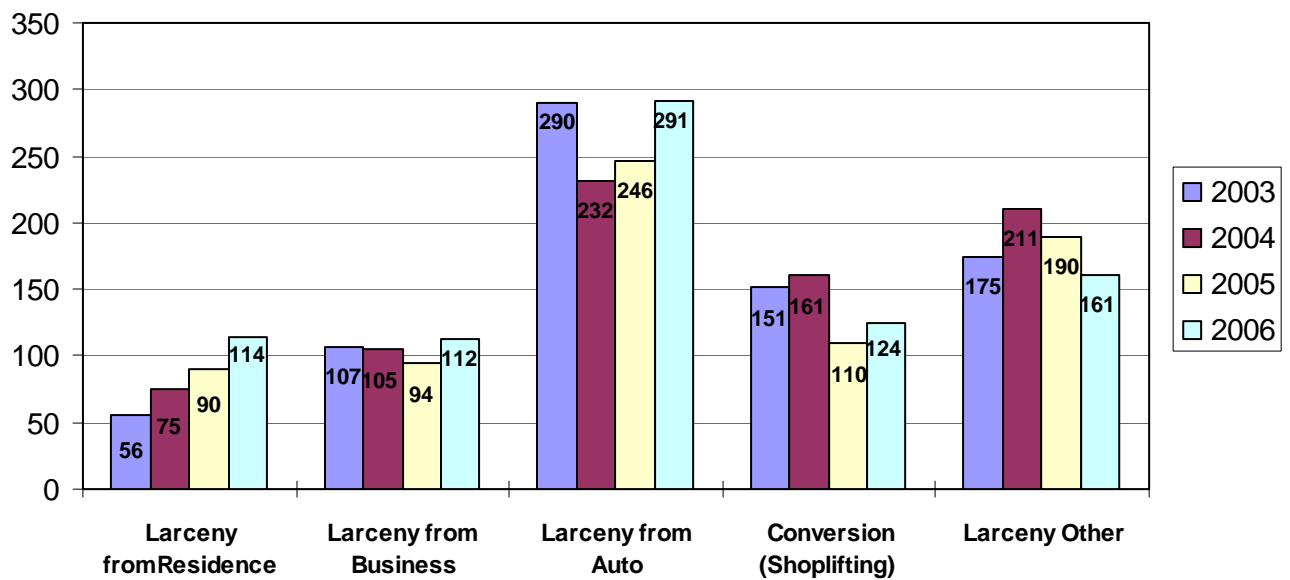
"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Reported Auto Thefts

Year to Year Comparison

Year	Auto Thefts	Auto Theft Recoveries
2003	181	54
2004	164	62
2005	154	94
2006	150	62

■ **Auto Thefts** ■ **Auto Theft Recoveries**
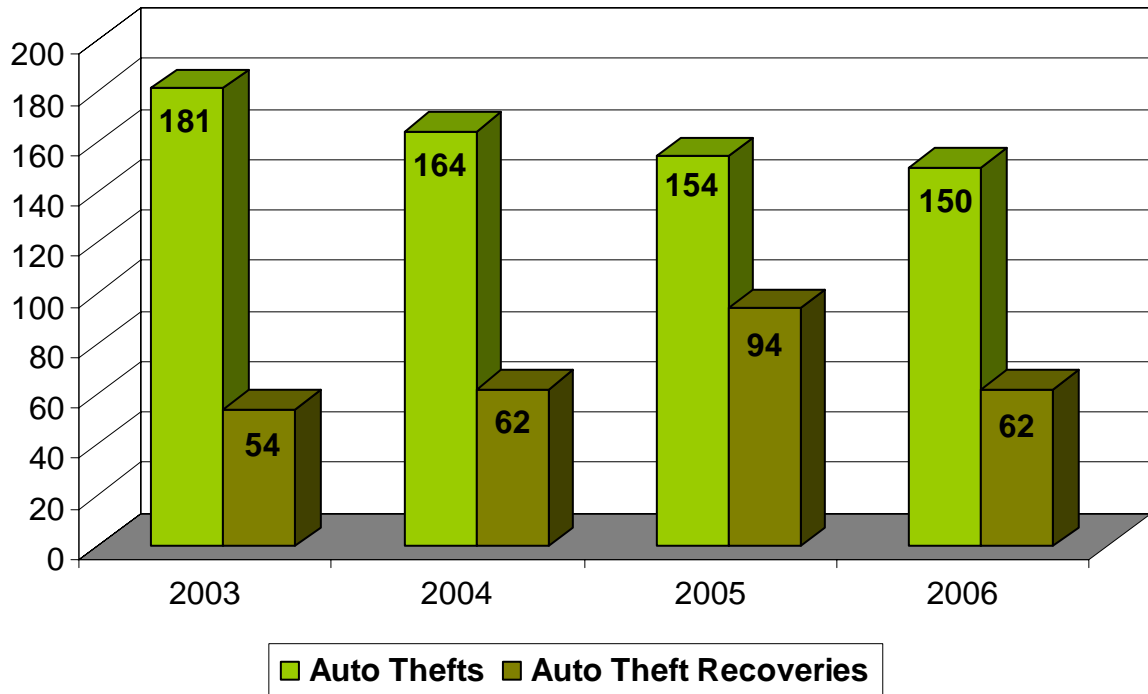
Auto Theft by Time of Day

Time	2005	2006	%Change
6p—6a	91	93	+2
6a—6p	63	50	-21

Auto Theft Recovery

Stolen Locally and Recovered Locally	**28**
Stolen Locally and Recovered by other jurisdiction	**64**
Total Stolen Vehicles Recovered	**92**
Stolen Out of Town, Recovered In Town	**16**

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Yearly Percentage Change

Percent Change by Classification

Classification	2005 Actual Calls	2006 Actual Calls	% Change 2005-2006
False Alarms	1708	1747	+2
Traffic Arrests	10941	12523	+13
Traffic Warnings	2239	2642	+15
D.U.I. Arrests	134	126	-6
Accident Totals	1841	1830	-1
Accident Injury	358	337	-6
Accident Hit & Run	91	96	+5
Accident Fatality	6	6	0
Accident Pedestrian	1	0	-100
Homicide	0	1	+100
Rape	4	1	-75
Robbery	18	27	+33
Assault	253	172	-32
Burglary Residence	50	62	+20
Burglary Business	32	30	-7
Auto Theft	154	150	-3
Auto Recovery	94	62	-35
Larceny Residence	90	114	+21
Larceny Auto	246	291	+15
Police Service Calls	43400	45934	+6
Patrol Hours	80553	82413	+3

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Calls for Service by District

34%

27%

19%

20%

East
West
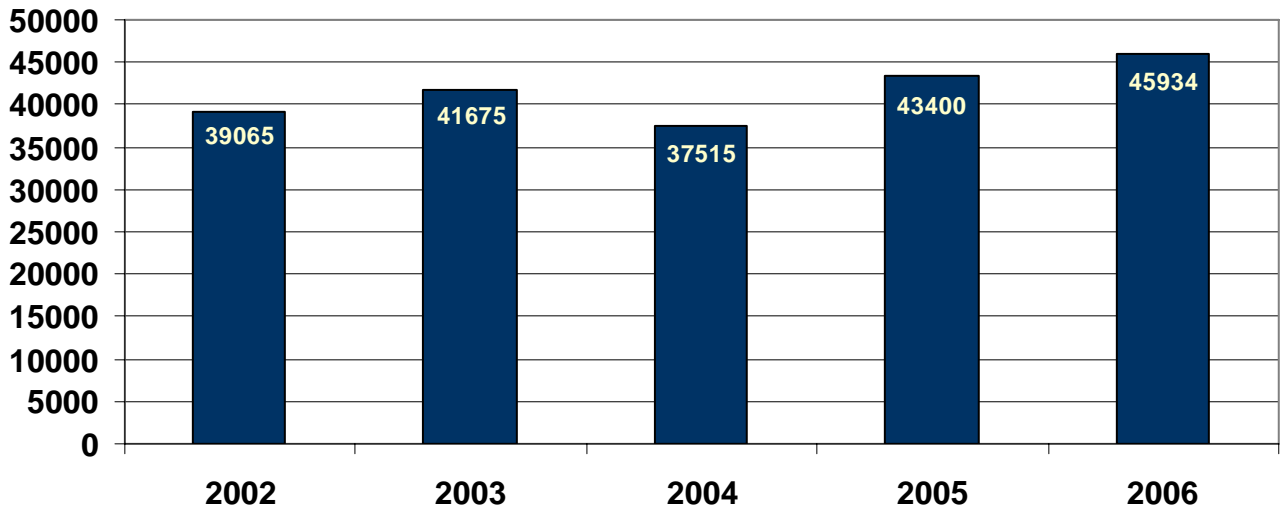**Southeast**
Southwest
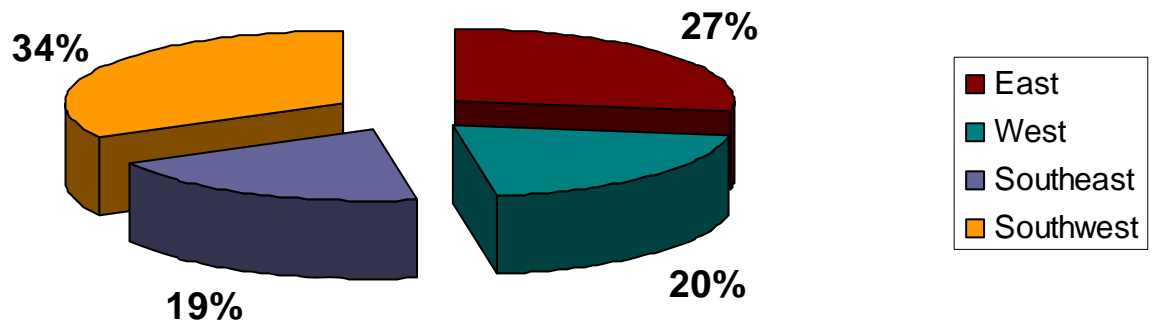
Total Calls For Service ……. 45,934

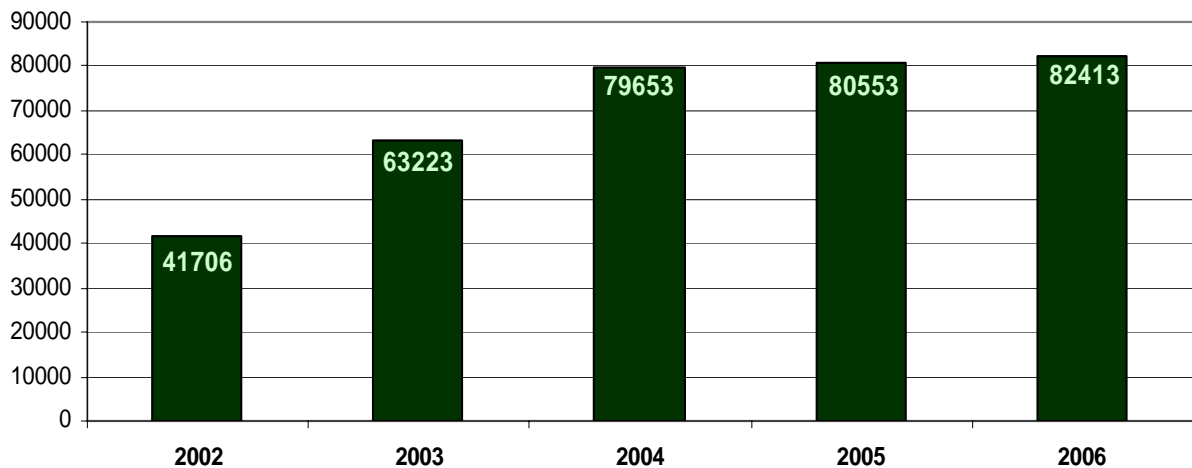*"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"*

Police Service Calls / Patrol Hours

Police Service Calls

Year by Year Comparison

Year	Police Service Calls
2002	39065
2003	41675
2004	37515
2005	43400
2006	45934

Officer Patrol Hours

Year by Year Comparison

Year	Officer Patrol Hours
2002	41706
2003	63223
2004	79653
2005	80553
2006	82413

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Department Arrests

Total Criminal Arrests
Year to Year Comparison

Legend: ■ Adult Arrests ■ Juvenile Arrests

Year	Adult Arrests	Juvenile Arrests
2002	740	134
2003	848	151
2004	809	128
2005	979	184
2006	1054	220
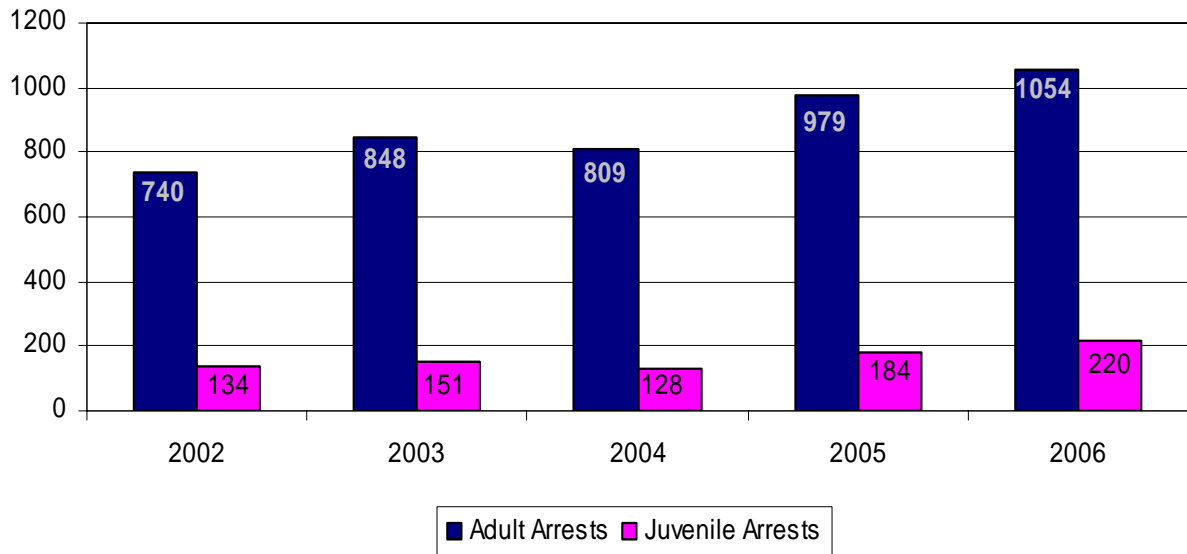
Drunk Driving Arrests
Year to Year Comparison

Year	Drunk Driving Arrests
2002	190
2003	207
2004	157
2005	134
2006	126
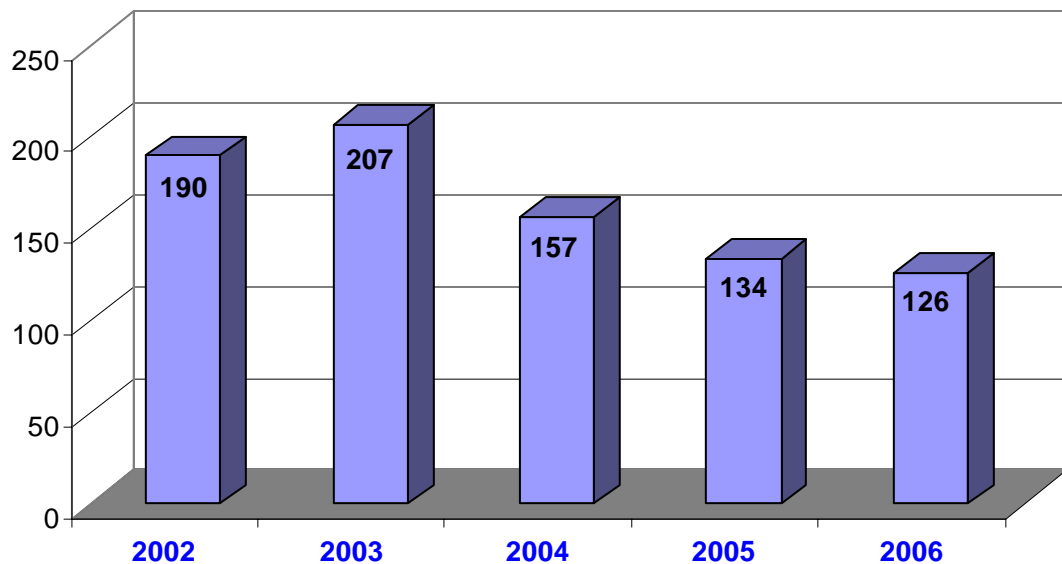
"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

Criminal Investigation

Detective Cpl. Rice and Det. Lt. Toth discuss a crime scene.
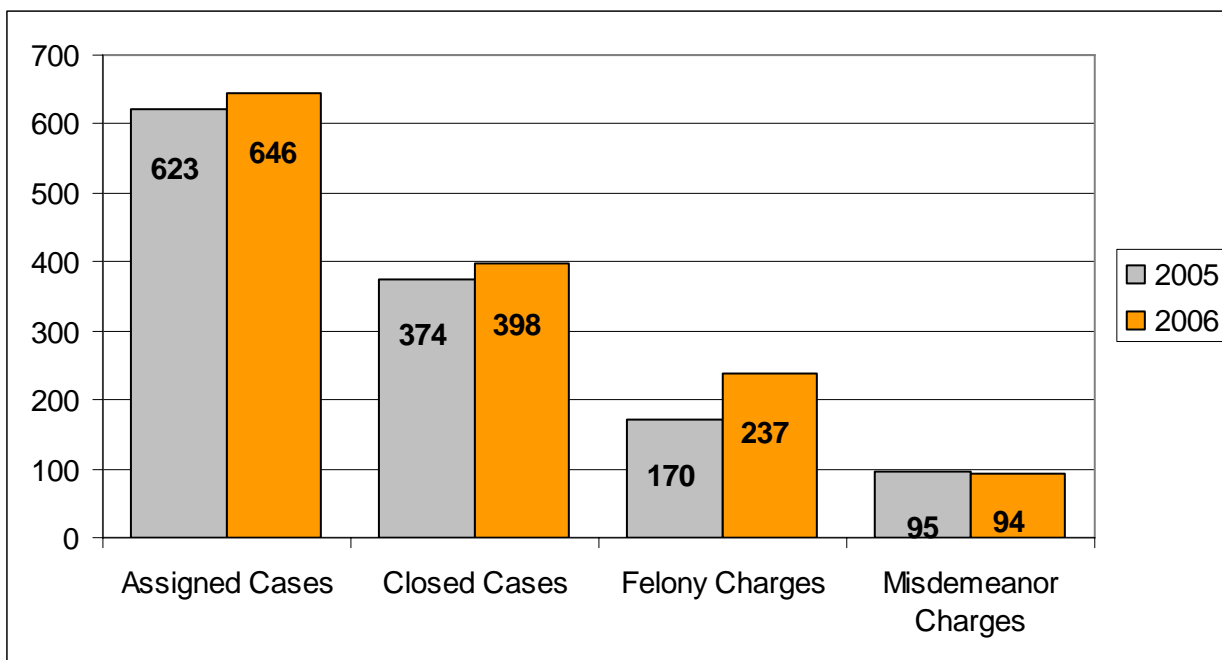
Total Cases Assigned : **646**
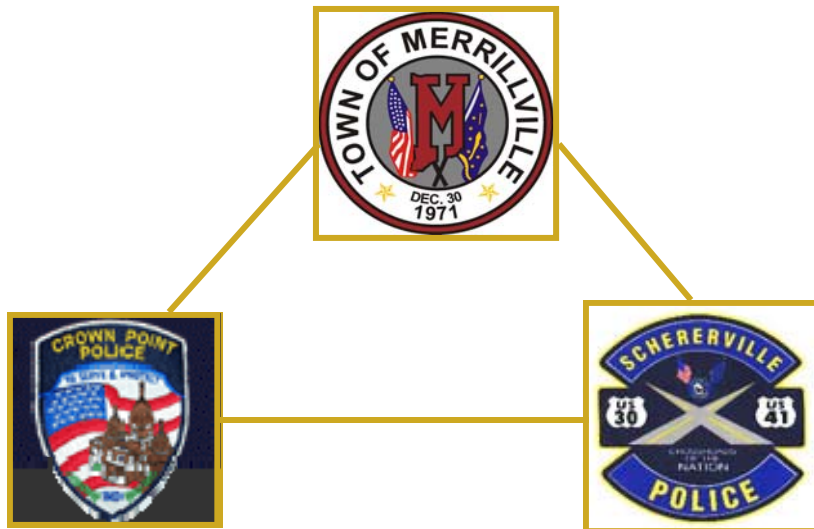
Total Closed Cases : **398**

Total Charges Filed : **387**

2006 Closure Rate

62 %

Year to Year Comparison

Year to Year Comparison chart:

Category	2005	2006
Assigned Cases	623	646
Closed Cases	374	398
Felony Charges	170	237
Misdemeanor Charges	95	94

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Emergency Response Team

Community Cooperation

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Honor Guard

Merrillville Police Honor Guard has been established to represent the Merrillville Police Department, its officers and families at police funerals, parades and other ceremonial occasions. It is our intention to assist all officers and their families during their time of emotional duress from the loss or debilitating injury of their loved one.

Every 57 hours a law enforcement officer is killed on duty.

On average, 150 law enforcement officers are killed each year.

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School Resource Officers

Sgt. B. Best

Ofc. D. Etienne

Sergeant Brad Best and Officer Donnell Etienne have been assigned as the School Resource Officer (SRO) for the Merrillville Community School Corporation. The SRO program has been in effect for over two decades in many schools throughout the nation. More information on the SRO concept is available at www. NASRO.org.

The goal of an SRO is to serve as a resource for students, teachers, non-instructional staff, parents, administrators, and the community. Since the SRO is a trained police officer, he also focuses on prevention and early intervention, improving the school's security policies, and providing support and help for students who may be struggling with personal issues that could affect their educational welfare. The SRO program was originally funded through the United States Justice Department and is a partnership between the school district and the Merrillville Police Department.

Sergeant Best and Officer Etienne have offices located in each of the school's they serve.

Many days, the SRO can be found walking the hallways, keeping peace in the cafeteria by having lunch with students, or monitoring recess. This type of interaction gives him the chance to get better acquainted with students and staff, learn more about school programs and policies, and be visible and accessible to all.

Additionally, some of his other duties may involve:

- Working with administrators to review and improve security policies and crisis management plans.

- Serving as a liaison between the schools, the police department, and the community.

- Assisting with police-related matters that could potentially create an unsafe situation.

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2006 Annual D.A.R.E. Report

2006 was once again a successful year for the Merrillville Police Department D.A.R.E. Program. The D.A.R.E. unit of the Police Department has been teaching in the Merrillville Community Schools since 1991 and have instructed nearly 7,500 students on the harmful effects of drugs and other risky behaviors. The D.A.R.E. program reached over 550 5th graders during the 2005-06 school year alone.

The D.A.R.E. Officer, Sgt. John Kralik, also provides younger children with other programs. He visits all the Merrillville Elementary Schools and provides a curriculum focused on Kindergarten thru 4th grade. This education process prepares younger students who may be confronted by situations which they may need to make decisions prior to getting the complete D.A.R.E. education which is provided in 5th grade.

It is clear that the D.A.R.E. Program is one of the most effective tools the Town of Merrillville has in the effort to educate and protect our children from the negative effects of drugs and other negative behaviors. I believe that as the Town continues to grow and the schools become more populated, new challenges will face our agency and the D.A.R.E. program. We will continue to accept the challenges as we enter the years to come.

Sgt. J. Kralik

D.A.R.E. Officer

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Animal Control Division

Barbra Breger

Special Service Officer

Total Animals Taken to Hobart Humane Society by Merrillville Police   446

Total Animals Taken to Hobart Humane Society by Merrillville Residents   47

Total Dispatched Runs

857

Total Calls Handled

1982

Total Expenses for Animal Care

$ 7,468.00

Hobart Humane Society

Cost per Animal………………$ 15.00/Day for 72 Hours

Animals held after 72hours …. $10.00/Day thereafter

"Protecting and Serving Because We Care"

2006 Photos

POLICE

Merrillville , Indiana